

GREATER NEW YORK CITIZENS ON CONSOLIDATION.

OPINIONS OF NEW YORKERS.

Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst said: "A big scheme, a plot, is involved in the whole of this consolidation business. There is a growing conviction in the minds of the public that the scheme is distinctly political in its purpose."

"I believe that consolidation must come, but the time is not now. That certain parties are so anxious to have the plan consummated leads to grave suspicion. These persons are at Albany."

"To suppose that the legislators would devote themselves so assiduously to the plan if there were nothing in it of a political character is rendered almost impossible by the opinion that we have formed of the men."

"Legislatures being what they have been, there is room for suspicion. At present there is evil in consolidation, and it would be exceedingly unfortunate to the lovers of good government if accomplished. There are certain influences at work on this side of the river which are unpromising. The same conditions exist on the other side. There is evil, too, on both sides, and this evil would immediately coalesce."

"The mere breadth of the river between the rascals of both cities would not be sufficient to prevent them from combining. There would be a combination into a gigantic ring, and the promise of evils proportionately greater than those we have just mitigated. The Brooklyn people feel this way concerning the matter, too."

"The backward step in the direction of Tammany has alarmed the people, and with good reason."

"Storrs has expressed the thing with his usual ability. Immediate consolidation will be a thing to be deeply regretted. The State should be aroused against the scheme formulated solely to feather the nests of politicians. For that is just what it is."

"The Platt Republicans and the Tammany people coalesce with perfect facility, and in all the struggle the interest of the public counts for little; that of Thomas C. Platt is paramount."

"Platt would be perfectly willing that New York and Brooklyn should go to the devil everlasting if he can name the President and secure for himself the Treasury portfolio."

"I think that Platt is the most boldly cynical man regarding great moral questions that I have ever seen. In this he is a remarkable man. Also in his ability to ignore the honest public's needs for what can be secured by Thomas C. Platt. But slumbering resentment is being aroused, and it will prevail against the schemers and the rascals."

"While I am not disposed to antagonize consolidation, per se, yet there are reasons why, in my judgment, that consolidation should not be pushed to an immediate consummation."

"One of these reasons is that the scheme, considering the men in whose hands it now is at Albany, involves a plot looking to the continuation of machine Platt Republicans and Tammany Hall and the setback of the reform movement by punishing and eliminating certain official representatives of that movement, whose chief offense is that they have done as well and wisely as they know how—the thing they swore they would not do."

"I believe that if the eye of the State at large can be really opened to the situation and the conscience quickened to an appreciation of the meaning of it, the volume of antagonism to such a plot will become not only manifest, but irresistible."

The People Have Spoken.
—Andrew H. Green.

Andrew H. Green, president of the Municipal Consolidation Company: Consolidation, it seems, is not very thoroughly understood, and I see that some persons opposed to it are clamoring that it be again submitted to the people. By a majority of over 40,000 the people voted for a consolidation of the two cities and the suburbs. Now it is proposed to submit the question again. It would be just as fair to submit the election of Governor Morton to the people again. They have expressed their will, and their servants, the Legislature, should do their bidding. The bill does not propose for anything but the consolidation of the two cities and some suburbs into one city. It does not affect any office-holder. The election of a Mayor of the Greater New York, the uniting of city offices is another question which must come up later on. The bill distinctly states that the government of the municipalities affected shall remain the same, subject to the action of the Legislature. Now, if after the bill making New York and Brooklyn one city, the people of Brooklyn do not care to have one Mayor, they have their Senators and representatives in the Legislature to fight against it.

After passing the bill as it now stands it will be time enough to go into the details of the consolidation. A new Mayor will have to be elected for both Brooklyn and New York in 1898. If the Legislature sees fit to pass a law saying that one Mayor shall not be for the Greater New York after 1898, then it will have but one Mayor. If it does not pass such a law, then it will remain as it is at present. Each side will claim that there is politics in every move that is made. But politics has never figured in the action of the Commission.

Only a Junket for Delay.
—Preston Tucker.

Preston Tucker, a prominent organizer of Good Government Clubs: I don't know what to think, in view of the action of the Legislature. Previous to the election, when the Consolidated Good Government Clubs held a convention to endorse the nomination of Mayor Strong, I had a resolution to introduce favoring consolidation, but did not present it, as I thought there was enough business to be done outside of that. The majority of the Good Government Clubs, though, are in favor of consolidation. It seems to me that the appointment of a committee by the Legislature to come down here and get expressions of opinion, is merely a junketing affair, and done for delay. The only sensible way to proceed, it seems to me, is for the Governor to appoint a commission to attend to the details and draft a charter. The commission on second and third class cities has

Leading Men in the Cities of New York and Brooklyn Discuss the Proposed Amalgamation, Its Prospects and the Legislative Committee's Investigation.

done good work, and the members might be included in the Greater New York Commission. But, apparently, the gentlemen who control things at Albany, have other designs. If Mr. Platt is earnest in his support of Governor Morton for the Presidency, he is shrewd enough not to place his candidate in a hole before the National Convention. If the Legislature should pass a bad bill and the Governor should sign it, or if a good bill should be passed and the Governor should veto it, you can see how, in either event, opposition to him might be created. Mr. Platt is too far-seeing to permit anything of that kind, provided, of course, he is earnestly in favor of Morton's candidacy, something I have no reason to doubt.

I hardly think the rumors that Mr. Platt has a plan to reorganize the Police Department are true. The present administration of the Police Board is very popular among the best citizens, and is certainly popular with the majority of the citizens of the State outside of New York City. I think Platt would alienate a large part of his supporters by securing the removal of the present Commissioners. Platt is a reformer, and doesn't pretend to be, but he knows that with a Presidential election coming on, he cannot afford to disrupt his party or antagonize a large element in it. If politics is permitted to influence the consolidation of the cities, it will hurt the party engineering it, and Mr. Platt knows that. So my opinion is that with a legislative committee on a junket until the Presidential election is settled. I don't think any legislative committee can prepare a suitable measure for the government of the greater city. That ought to be left to a non-partisan commission, and, though I am a Democrat, I am willing to trust Governor Morton to appoint a capable commission.

We Should Have One City
—Henry Clews.

Henry Clews, banker: I hope consolidation will be effected, and the sooner the better. New York would then be second only to London in size, and before long we would outstrip London in population. The taxpayers would be benefited by the saving of money spent for the support of several municipal governments. With New York and Brooklyn one city, bridges connecting them would be numerous, and in the suburbs we would have one city, devoid of jealousies which now exist and operate to the disadvantage of both. As to political considerations, I think they will adjust themselves. Politics should not enter into the question, and I do not see why the Legislature should not have been here to get the views of people who have already expressed their opinion at the polls.

Union Sentiment Strong.
—Frank H. Platt.

Frank H. Platt, of the law firm Tracy, Boardman & Platt, and son of Thomas C. Platt: I know nothing about our first having been selected to draw up a charter for the consolidation of Greater New York. Besides, I would not be overpleased to learn of such an arrangement. The work in preparing a charter for the consolidation of the cities and towns proposed to be joined to New York will be immense. It will involve a great deal of devising and up to me much time. I am heartily in favor of consolidation, and would like to see it brought about as soon as possible. The people have voted in favor of it, and I think the sentiment has been growing stronger every day.

Real Estate Would Boom
—Hiram Snyder.

Hiram Snyder, treasurer of the Building Material Exchange: I believe that if the question were to be submitted to a vote again the majority would be much larger than it was. The chief opposition at the time the question was submitted came from politicians, and persons who paid rent. The latter thought that rents would be raised when union was effected, but really would be enhanced in value, and the general public benefited. I know it to be a fact that building operations have been delayed, because of the procrastination over such a union. Owners expect real estate to boom when Brooklyn becomes part of New York, and they are holding off for better times. This delay is putting things back considerably. What good a committee can do by coming here and talking over matters, I fail to see. I suppose that is part of the plan of delay, but we don't want any more delay. I think the cities could be consolidated and a satisfactory form of municipal government arranged without much trouble, and an early settlement of the question would certainly be beneficial to all parties.

Voters for Consolidation.
—Henry White.

Henry White, General Secretary of the United Garment Workers of America: As the voters of New York and Brooklyn have declared themselves in favor of the consolidation of the two great cities, it is the duty of the Legislature to at once proceed to draft a suitable charter for the Greater New York. It is absurd to think that legislators from country districts and smaller towns can be qualified to legislate for this great city. If the citizens would find that they are directly responsible to themselves in the selection and control of officials, I have no doubt it would result in better government, and all the corrupt or compromising deals and dickens that must now be made with the ruling power at Albany would be something of the past. The Greater New York would mean a more harmonious development of what is now the suburbs of the two cities.

Workers Would Benefit.
—John F. Bergen.

John F. Bergen, president of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers: I believe that every working man would be benefited by the consolidation of New York, Brooklyn and the suburban towns into the Greater New York. In my trade nearly all the employers have branches in Brooklyn, and this Greater New York idea would bring about consolidation of interests which would be of benefit to all. It would also infuse into Brooklyn something of the vim and energy of New York. Wages would

Hill and Parkhurst Denounce Platt and Ascribe to Him Intentions of Turning the Issue to His Political Profit in State and Nation.

be better for the Brooklyn people; the generous and intelligent competition which is the keynote to the prosperity of a great city would be increased, and all would be benefited. I believe every member of a trades union ought to welcome the annexation of Brooklyn to New York.

No Need for Investigation
—Richard V. Harnett.

Richard V. Harnett, Real Estate Broker: Necessarily a great deal of preliminary work in the drafting of a charter would have to be done, and the details of the municipal government will require the thought and study of capable and practical men, but there does not seem to be any great need of an investigating committee, if that is what the committee is coming here for.

Union Is Bound to Come.
—Louis Wehner.

Louis Wehner, Delegate of the Union and Skyline Makers: I am strongly in favor of the Greater New York. It is bound to come, and those who oppose it are persons who have some selfish interests that they think would be menaced by the change. While Brooklyn and New York have separate interests, Brooklyn will always be behind her great sister city. Let Brooklyn and New York be united, taking in all the suburban cities, and we would eventually have the greatest city in the world.

Prosperity Is in Union.
—William J. O'Brien.

William J. O'Brien, President of the Board of Walking Delegates: Every workman, I believe, will be in favor of the Greater New York. Every one who is against it is helping to retard a consummation which is inevitable and which means greater prosperity for all when it comes. The consolidation of New York and her sister cities into one municipality is bound to come sooner or later, and the sooner it comes the better.

Lower Taxes, Lift Wages.
—Patrick Tahaney.

Patrick Tahaney, delegate of the Plasterers' Laborers' Union: I am heartily in favor of the Greater New York and always have been so. It would mean smaller taxes, larger commercial interests, a greater demand for labor, and consequently higher wages and more consumption of manufactured articles.

Short-Sighted Objectors.
—Delegate Ivory.

Delegate Ivory, of Electrical Workers' Union No. 34: Put me down in favor of the Greater New York. The man is very short-sighted who would oppose it. Those who throw obstacles in the way of consolidating the entire metropolitan district into one city are fighting against the march of improvement and a higher civilization.

A Community of Interests
—Delegate Nelson.

Delegate Nelson, of the Stone Cutters' Union: I believe in the Greater New York idea. It will bring Brooklyn up to the standard of New York, and there should be a community of interests between Brooklyn and New York. With Brooklyn and New York as one city the wages of mechanics in both cities would rise to the same level, whereas they are lower in many trades in Brooklyn at present than in New York.

Senator Hill Says Platt Menaces Home Rule in the Greater City.

Washington, D. C., Jan. 15.

Senator David B. Hill:

"I must know Mr. Platt's scheme before I tell you whether I am in favor of 'The Greater New York' and all that that implies to Mr. Platt. My pride in New York is just as great. In fact, I yield to no man in that respect; but I am averse to putting these two great municipalities into the clutches of a bold and unscrupulous politician, no matter to what party he belongs. I believe in home rule. Both cities are probably Democratic, and if this scheme of Mr. Platt's is to be exploited by a Republican Legislature, the merest novice in politics can understand what sort of a charter would be prepared. Such a document would not even have the merit of being revised by a committee of Mr. Platt's selection. It would be written by some creature of his at his dictation and looked over and edited by him alone, in the privacy of his study or counting room. While I have not read the names of Mr. Platt's Sub-Committee on Cities, I can very well understand its composition—how many Republican members it has, and how many Democrats."

"There are four Senators and five Assemblymen, with Senator Clarence Lexow at its head. Of these nine members, Senator Grady, of New York, is the only Democrat."

"I don't want to know more. That is quite sufficient. Just think of it, he appoints a committee with a Nyack man at its head. Nyack is not a part of New York. It's the same old programme. The people of two of the greatest cities in this country are utterly at the mercy of a hostile Legislature. I told Andrew H. Green—God bless his soul!—more than a year ago just what he would have to expect. I admired his sentiment, but feared his philosophy."

"You regard Mr. Platt's plan to consolidate the cities as a menace to home rule?"

"That puts it very mildly. Good men cannot be ignored in politics any more than in commercial life. Who can tell what Mr. Platt might do in the Greater New York? He might load its city government down with commissions, a majority of which in each case would be his tools. He could strike a deadly blow at self-government. 2 Theoretically it is a grand scheme to unite the two great cities and give our country the second city of the world. It is magnificent, but it is not politics—and in saying this I do not imply any narrow meaning, but the broadest interpretation of the word 'politics.' The dominant party in a city should control its management, and I would be glad to see the two cities united if it could be done by the people themselves, and by a popular vote in which every citizen, to the uttermost one, should cast his ballot. Seriously, it is a matter of grave doubt whether the people of the two cities want them united. The margin in favor of consolidation was very narrow, so much so that a few votes would have turned the scale. As I say, it would be another thing if the voters of these two great municipalities could choose a commission to frame their own charter, but to allow a lot of country Republicans to do it for them—that is, to pretend to do it for them, for of course Mr. Platt would attend to the charter business—is ridiculous, not to say contemptible. The majority of such a commission named by Mr. Platt is sure to be antagonistic in sentiment and environment to the people of the great metropolis."

"What does Mr. Platt want?"

"He wants to get rid of Strong—that's evident. I am not worrying about that; but there are many other people in New York who might be affected. Mr. Platt doesn't care a thing about the rights of the majority, unless that majority is of his own party. The complexion of this committee shows it. No sane man can fail to see his motives. You can say that whenever the two cities can be honestly united I am in favor of such a union. I don't have to see the charter that Mr. Platt will make to know what it will be."

Complications in the Situation at Albany, Where Lexow Is Preparing for His Committee's Work.

Albany, N. Y., Jan. 15.—The Sub-Committee of the Senate and Assembly, which has the Greater New York matter in charge, will meet in the Common Council room in Brooklyn City Hall on Friday morning at 11 o'clock and give a public hearing to those persons who oppose consolidation. Another meeting of the committee will be held on Saturday, and then it will decide if there shall be another meeting on Monday. Senator Lexow leaves to-morrow to arrange for the meetings.

The Greater New York question is to be handled at T. C. Platt's direction as a political matter. There is no other explanation for the conflicting statements purposely made by machine Republicans. Brooklyn legislators are rapidly drawing the conclusion that they are being "strung," as the small boy would say.

When Senator Lexow introduced his resolution, which provided for the sub-committee of which he is chairman, all the Republicans, presumably in Mr. Platt's confidence, said vehemently there was no intention to delay the settlement of the Greater New York question. Then the Wurster-Willis faction in Brooklyn served notice on Mr. Platt that if he did not retard the matter for one year at least, the Kings County delegation to the Republican National Convention would be anti-Platt.

CONFLICTING OPINIONS.

This alarmed Mr. Platt, Governor Morton and the machine men generally. Two days ago Senator Ellsworth, the Republican Senate leader, said the sub-committee would, in his judgment, merely inquire into the consolidation question to learn the sentiment of the people in the territory concerned. This was clearly meant to relieve the anxiety of the Brooklyn Republicans, and it succeeded admirably.

Yesterday there was nothing but consolidation talk. State Chairman Hackett was here, and spoke as if Greater New York were assured. The Republican members of the sub-committee, except Senator Brush, spoke in the same strain. The sub-committee met to-day for the first time. Senator Lexow said to his colleagues that the object of the sub-committee is to give public hearings to determine whether the Lexow bill—the one Andrew H. Green's Commission drew—or the Brush bill should be recommended to the Legislature.

The Lexow bill declares that the territory has been consolidated and provides for actual consolidation in 1898. The Brush bill provides that the question of consolidation shall be re-submitted to the people.

"The object of these hearings," said Senator Grady, after the committee had adjourned, "is to settle upon either the Lexow or Brush bill."

WHAT DID LEXOW SAY?

"The object, as publicly stated by Senator Lexow is to prepare a method of consolidation because consolidation has been decreed," some one remarked.

"I could not have been mistaken in Senator Lexow's statement, recently made," said Senator Grady. "He said our committee was to give hearings and decide whether the Lexow bill, providing for consolidation, or the Brush bill, providing for a re-submission, should be recommended."

No counsel was engaged by the sub-committee, although the resolution creating it authorized the engagement of counsel. It has been generally believed that the law firm of Tracy, Boardman & Platt would be retained to draw a charter.

In the Assembly to-day Mr. Stanchfield called attention to the fact that on the sub-committee there is not one Democratic Assemblyman from New York City. He had appealed from a decision of the Chair on a trivial point, in order to get the floor.

The minority would fight for its rights during the session, he said, and would not be deprived of the rights, which should be accorded it. The subject of a Greater New York was no more a matter of State interest. It was of national importance. Whenever the people of New York State traveled they would hear of Greater New York and what would be the result of it.

STANCHFIELD PREDICTS.

"I ask in the name of fair play," said Mr. Stanchfield, "in the name of the Democracy, that our rights be respected. I also claim that it is not the intention of the Republican party to pass the Greater New York bill. I register here and now the statement that the Republican party intends to kill this measure. Why, only the other night, when the Senate resolution was to be submitted here asking for a Greater New York committee, Senator Lexow had to be called to the Speaker's side to guide him in the way he should go. I again ask in the name of Democracy that New York City have a fair representation."

Mr. O'Grady said he thought the majority intended to be fair, and that the Democratic representation was a just one. Outside of this the Chair had no power over the representation on a joint committee, which could not be changed except by a concurrent resolution. The appeal was laid on the table by a vote of 90 to 40.

THE FEELING IN BROOKLYN.

Rev. R. S. Storrs, of Pilgrim Church, Brooklyn, said:

I am strongly opposed to consolidation, and I believe my fellow-citizens are with me. It is a question whether a city sixty years old, with a million of inhabitants, is to be moved by power without its own intelligent and decisive consent. It seems to me there can but be one answer given by fair-minded men. In the first place, the vote of 1894 was not a vote at all, but was expressly declared in the legislative act to be merely an expression of opinion without any legal value whatever. It is regarded by many as simply a huge public joke. There was not the slightest organization on the part of those who did not desire consolidation with New York. I don't know whether there was on the other side, but I presume there was. There was said to be a majority of 277 preferences for consolidation out of a total registration of 101,000, less than one-sixth of 1 per cent of the proposed consolidation of a city of a million population with one or two millions is an absolutely unprecedented thing. Such a vast city, where now there are two cities, varying from each other in their characteristics, may have a lasting and mighty bearing on the future of the State and the future of the country. As a general thing cities become more corrupt and more unmanageable as they grow large. London, Berlin and Paris are governed by armed empires or republics. We have no such resources. Our republic has no armed force to guard and contend against great, extensive organized riots in the cities. Again, what guarantee have we that Tammany

Hill is not to come into power again in New York? I presume the people of Brooklyn would hardly relish the prospect of finding themselves under its domination. It is claimed that taxation will be reduced, but the tax rate in New York is steadily and rapidly rising. They are just about going into a debt of \$75,000,000 or \$100,000,000 for an underground railroad. The interest on that has to be paid, and amounts to double the entire sum Brooklyn's funded debt, which has been accumulating for a long series of years. And that is to construct a road of no earthly use to Brooklyn, and the entire effect of which will be to pull people away from Kings County. We should have to face that, and that any Brooklyn man should want to place his house and property under the shadow of that seems incredible. They say consolidation is bound to come; but it should only come if we want it. It is bound to come if we are supine with regard to it, but it ought not, and cannot come if we resist. The future of Brooklyn should remain in the hands of Brooklyn, and if an earnest vote were now taken, I feel certain it would be found that the Brooklyn people do not desire to have its identity destroyed and for it to be known hereafter to the world as the 'sou'-sou'-east-by-sou' of New York."

Revenge for Union.
—T. H. Loomis.

T. H. Loomis, prominent Republican, No. 288 Quincy street: It has been a puzzle to me to understand why the Republicans in the Legislature should so persist in the merging of our city in one so malodorous as New York. It seems to me to be capable of assignment to ignorance or venality. If they succeed in their nefarious deal, as sure as there is a God in heaven the Republican party of New York State will be punished for it. It will be very fortunate if the country at large does not also suffer as it has for the delay in the Polier campaign, which resulted in the presidential chair. If consolidation is forced upon us, I fully believe that no Republican will again be sent to Albany from what is now Kings County. There has never been a voter in my family who was not a Republican of the deepest and truest type, but if the Republican Legislature of New York prostitute itself and debauches the city of Brooklyn, without giving us an opportunity to say whether or not it shall be, so long as I may remain a voter in this State my vote and my work will be to punish or destroy New York State Republicans.

Brooklyn for Union 2 to 1.
—George W. Chauncey.

George W. Chauncey, Real Estate Broker, No. 257 Henry street: I believe the Legislature appointed this committee in good faith to report on the views of the people of New York and Brooklyn as they find them, but re-submission is absolutely out of the question. There has been no argument brought out that comes with any force. All close elections are unsatisfactory to the defeated party. That is the case in this matter. To say that the people did not understand it when they voted is an insult to their intelligence. The great majority of the people here favor consolidation. The prominent merchants, bankers and manufacturers are 2 to 1 in its favor. The opposition comes almost entirely from those who do business in New York and live on the Heights. Many of these have an idea that Brooklyn does not extend beyond the City Hall. As to the outcome of the bill, it will pass, and a large majority. The consolidation party as represented by the people active in the movement, asks but one condition—equal taxation and a charter that will be fair and equitable to all the people of the consolidated district. The opposition consists of three elements—those who don't want it on any terms, those who believe in a referendum and those who believe in re-submission. We believe that we will win.

Feeling for Resubmission
—William C. Redfield.

William C. Redfield, President of the League of Loyal Citizens of Brooklyn: I am glad that the committee has decided to visit Brooklyn first. Our League will do all in its power to make their stay here agreeable and pleasant. They will gain knowledge of the strength of the feeling in favor of re-submission that will impress if not astonish them. I think re-submission is the only fair and right way the question of consolidation can at present be treated. The vote of 1894 was only an expression of opinion. To claim that it was final is to nullify the anti-election pledge to misinterpret the law and to base upon such nullification and misinterpretation the theft of our autonomy. Naturally I prefer Greater Brooklyn to Greater New York, and I think there is room for them both. I think Brooklyn can be of more service to the State of New York as an example to New York City than as an ingredient in it.

More Bridges and a Vote.
—C. L. Rossiter.

C. L. Rossiter, President of the Brooklyn Heights Railroad Company and Brooklyn City Railroad: To my mind the Greater New York is not so important as the improvement of the bridge facilities. We must have more spans across East River. I have no doubt that property in Brooklyn would increase in value if consolidation was brought about, but still, I do not think plying and other improvements would be carried out as quickly as they would across the river. There certainly must be a final vote by the people. It is their right.

Must Wed New York City
—General Horatio C. King.

General Horatio C. King, No. 140 Willow street: The union of New York and Brooklyn is inevitable. The time must come when the owners of Brooklyn real estate will resist to their

almost the further increase over the already exorbitant tax rate. The peculiarity of Brooklyn is that the larger it grows the poorer it grows, because the buildings erected do not produce a tax revenue at all adequate to the great expense of sewers, lights, police, fire, water and paving extension. The entire assessable value of Brooklyn, with its area of 50,000 acres—more than double that of New York—is less than the taxable value of property below Chambers street in New York. Brooklyn is in exactly the position of a maiden who marries to secure all the comforts of a home, Brooklyn must wed New York if she would keep pace with all the imperative demands of modern civilization. I am as anxious as any one that the union of the two cities should be united on an equitable basis.

Referendum or a Revolt.
—Jessie Fuller.

Jessie Fuller, until Tuesday night Chairman of the Republican County Committee of Kings: So they propose to put through the Greater New York bill at once. A majority of the people agree that no force bill shall be crammed down their throats. Re-submission or referendum must be provided. If it is not, the people will administer a rebuke as powerful as the next regular election that the Democratic party will carry Kings County.

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